

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1.-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring ~~at least one of a~~ media file and associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit, wherein the first use unit and second user unit each has a storage unit, an input buffer and an output buffer and wherein the media file includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data, comprising the steps of:

coupling at least one of the first user unit and second user unit over a communications network to a central interface unit;

identifying the ~~at least one of a~~ media file by ~~[[a]]~~ the central interface unit ~~wherein the media file includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data;~~

~~transferring the at least one of the media file and the associated usage rights data directly from the first user unit to the second user unit via a communication link between the first and second user units;~~

transferring the media file to be transferred from the storage unit of the first user unit, a transferring user unit, to the associated output buffer;

transferring the media file to be transferred from the output buffer of the transferring user unit to the input buffer of the second user unit, a receiving user unit;

limiting access by the first user unit to the media file and its associated usage rights data;

providing access to the second user unit to the media file and its associated usage rights data;

~~coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit;~~

logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer of ~~at least one of~~ the media file and its associated usage rights data to the second user unit;

generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file and its associated usage rights data; ~~[[and]]~~

transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file and its associated usage rights data is transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit;

integrating a media file history log into each media file that identifies at least one of previous owners and transfers of the media file; and

synchronizing the media file history log with the logged transfers stored within the central interface unit.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring ~~at least one of~~ a media file and associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit wherein the first user unit and second user unit each has a storage unit, an input buffer and an output buffer and wherein the media file includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data, comprising the steps of:

coupling at least one of the first user unit and second user unit over a communications network to the central interface unit;

identifying the at least one of the media file by a central interface unit, ~~wherein the at least one of a media file includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data;~~

~~coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit;~~

~~transferring at least one of the media file and the associated usage rights data from the first user unit to central interface unit and then to the second user unit;~~

transferring the media file to be transferred and the associated usage rights data from the storage unit of the first user unit, a transferring user unit, to the associated output buffer;

transferring the media file to be transferred and the associated usage rights data from the output buffer of the transferring user unit to the central interface unit;

logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer, wherein the second unit retrieves either the media file or the associated usage rights data, directly from the central interface unit;

integrating a history log into each media file that identifies at least one of previous owners and transfers of the media file; and

synchronizing the media file history log with the logged transfers stored within the central interface unit.

transferring the media file to be transferred and the associated usage rights data from the central interface unit to the input buffer of the second user unit, a receiving user unit;

limiting access by the first user unit to the media file and the associated usage rights data;

providing access to the second user unit to the media file and the associated usage rights data;

~~logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer, wherein the second unit retrieves either the media file or the associated usage rights data, directly from the central interface unit;~~

generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file and the associated usage rights data; and

transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file and the associated usage rights data is transferred from the first user unit to the central interface unit and then to the second user unit.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the second user unit has a second media file with associated usage rights data, the method further comprising the steps of:

transferring ~~at least one of~~ the second media file and its associated usage rights data from the second user unit to the first user unit;

limiting access by the second user unit to the second media file;

providing access to the first user unit to the second media file;

wherein the logging step further comprises the step of logging the transfer of ~~at least one of~~ the second media file and its associated usage rights data from the second user unit to the first user unit.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the transfer of ~~at least one of~~ the first media file and its associated usage rights data to the second user unit is part of a swap transaction conditioned upon the transfer of ~~at least one of~~ the second media file and its associated usage rights data to the first user unit.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the second user unit transfers more than one media file to the first unit as part of a swap transaction.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of generating a dummy media file substituting ~~at least one of~~ for the second media file and its associated usage rights data to satisfy the swap transaction conditions.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, wherein the logging step additionally comprises at least one of:

updating a transfer log associated with the transferring user unit to reflect the removal of the media file; and

updating a transfer log associated with the receiving user unit to reflect the addition of the transferred media file.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the steps of:

polling a digital rights management system within the central interface unit by either the transferring user unit or the receiving user unit; and

receiving a command or message from the digital rights management system by ~~the transferring user unit~~ to limit access ~~by the transferring user unit~~ to the transferred media file.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 29, further comprising the step of preventing access to a transferred media file ~~by a receiving user~~ if the digital rights management system has associated the transferred media file with a third user unit.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the step of cryptographically associating each transferred digital media file with a receiving user unit.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the step of transferring the transferred media file from the receiving user unit back to the transferring unit if the transfer is not ratified.

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the step of determining whether the media file is transferred with one or more usage restrictions.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the step of transferring the transferred media file from the receiving user unit back to the transferring user unit after a predetermined usage restriction condition associated with the transferred media file has been met.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the step of transferring the transferred media file from the receiving user unit back to the transferring user unit after a predetermined amount of time has expired, or after the receiving user unit has accessed the transferred media file greater than or equal to a predetermined number of occurrences, or if the transfer has not been ratified by the central interface unit, or if the transfer is subsequently cancelled, or if the transfer is not successful.

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[27]]~~ 21, further comprising the step of periodically communicating, by the central interface unit, with individual user units, to synchronize at least one of the media files and the associated usage rights data, if any, stored within each user unit with one or more databases within the central interface unit.

39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A computer program product embodied on a non-transitory computer readable medium loaded into a memory and executed by a ~~processor~~ microprocessor, comprising:

computer code portions for coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to a central interface unit;

computer code portions for transferring ~~at least one of~~ a media file ~~[[or]]~~ and associated usage rights data from a first user unit to a second user unit wherein the first user unit and second user unit each has a storage unit, an input buffer and an output buffer and wherein the media file is identifiable by ~~[[a]]~~ the central interface unit and includes at least one component of image data, audio data, and video data;

computer code portions for transferring ~~at least one of~~ the media file and the associated usage rights data from the storage unit of the first user unit, a transferring user unit, to the associated output buffer to the input buffer of the second user unit, a receiving user unit over a communication link between the first and second user units;

computer code portions for limiting access by the first user unit to the media file;

computer code portions for providing access to the second user unit to the media file;

~~computer code portions for coupling at least one of the first and second user units over a communications network to the central interface unit;~~

computer code portions for logging, at the central interface unit, the transfer of the media file to the second user unit;

computer code portions for integrating a history log into each media file that identifies at least one of previous owners and transfers of the media file;

computer code portions for synchronizing the media file history log with the logged transfers stored within the central interface unit;

computer code portions for generating an acknowledgment receipt by the second user unit after receipt of the media file; and

computer code portions for transferring the acknowledgment receipt from the second user unit to the first user unit after the media file is transferred from the first user unit to the second user unit.

41. - 42. (Canceled)

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